



Spring 2009

To all the friends of ASAP Africa,

“This has been a life-changing experience. How I wish ASAP had started their activities in our communities ten years ago! Our situation would have changed for the better by now,” exclaims Chief Chazunzika’s wife in Chikwawa District of southern Malawi. She is participating in ASAP’s *Chimvano pa Chuma* (CCP Unity for Economic Growth) project launched in January 2009. The three-year project will improve the income and crop harvest through village savings and lending and agricultural skills training.

ASAP is working in partnership with Total Land Care in the Chikwawa subsistence farming area, which has been stricken by drought again this year. The need for the micro-finance, small business skills and drought tolerant agriculture skills that the CCP project brings to the community is desperately needed in this time of severe hardship.

ASAP is thankful for the generous seed money from CORDAID in the Netherlands and The Dan and Page Walden Christian Fund. It is because of their generous support that this project has been launched successfully - but we are not out of the woods yet. ASAP is confident that expressions of interest from potential donors will bear fruit very soon. In the interim, ASAP has launched an emergency appeal to raise \$30,000 in bridge funding by the end of April to keep the Malawi project operating. WE NEED YOUR HELP TODAY. A contribution of only \$10 will help improve the life of a family in one of the poorest, drought stricken areas on the planet. Please donate on ASAP secure website by [clicking here](#) or follow the instructions below.

The ASAP team in Zimbabwe continues to do a stellar job implementing projects that will improve the sustainable income generating activities for over 25,000 families in ongoing partnerships with CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Concern World Wide and Plan International. In order to help stop the Cholera epidemic, the ASAP field staff has integrated knowledge and skills in identifying and preventing the transmission of cholera with their existing project activities – rural micro-finance, agriculture skills, and teacher training activities in 132 schools.

In Zimbabwe, where ASAP has been working since 1994, there are signs that the inflation (which reached 400,000,000%) has finally reversed, as the economy has been dollarized. There are now full shelves in the markets and prices are dropping as competition increases. Schools opened in March and attendance is high despite the cholera epidemic that has claimed over 4,000 lives since August 2008. The unity government, formed in February 2009, is not yet fully functional but there are signs and reasons for hope.

UNICEF recently contributed a new double cab truck to support ASAP’s work with CRS. This provided a morale boost as well as much needed additional mobility and the ability to expand projects. Negotiations are currently underway to expand ASAP’s project partnership with CRS into the Chimanimani region of Eastern Zimbabwe through the Out of School Adolescents project.

ASAP's Joint Initiative project partnership with CARE was recently extended for 18 months. ASAP will teach an additional 945 households how to effectively manage internal savings and lending activities in the high-density Sakubva area outside of urban Mutare, where ASAP has been working with CARE since 2006. As part of the JI project, ASAP will raise awareness of child protection issues and rights of people living with HIV and AIDS. Two child protection committees have been set up to safeguard children rights in Sakubva. One case in which a 12 year old girl was persistently physically abused by her stepmother was reported and the matter was referred to Zimbabwe Police. In this way, during sensitization meetings, the importance of child protection are shared, creating increased awareness for the majority of savings club clients as well.

The third year of the 5-year Rural Micro-Finance Project with CARE is ongoing in Mutasa and Nyanga districts. After the 2008 ban on NGO activities for much of the year, ASAP has moved into high gear in 2009 to reach the project target of improving household security for 17,824 families by December 2011. Today, savings clubs are no longer using the Zimbabwe dollar and may choose to trade in South African Rand, Mozambique Metical, or US Dollars, these savings clubs contribute significantly to a families' ability to survive.

The Sustainable Livelihoods project partnership with Concern World Wide in Zimbabwe was extended in January 2009, in the Katarere area of Nyanga. Due to the extreme poverty prevailing in this area, selected savings club members will receive a capital boost in the form of agricultural items such as chickens in order to kick-start income generating activities.

The Bridge the Gap (BTG) math teacher-training project is in the fifth and final year, focusing in on grade seven, the last year of primary school. This is the grand finale for the BTG. At the end of this year all grade 7 children will write external government exams, which are used to allocate positions in secondary school the following year. ASAP is expecting to see results well above the national average on these tests and ASAP's cluster coordinators are working diligently with teachers in the 132 BTG schools to make up for 2008 - when little formal education took place in these schools.

Here in the US, ASAP is pleased to announce our membership in the AID for AFRICA group of Combined Federal Campaign Affiliates. http://aidforafrica.org/donate_cfc.php. We hope that Federal employees who have contributed to ASAP through your annual campaign in previous years will continue to do so in 2009.

It is because of your support that, together with ASAP, we are able to improve the lives of thousands in rural Africa today. We are thankful to each of you that have taken the time to read this newsletter. We are sincerely grateful for your interest and hope you will choose to contribute to our emergency appeal for ASAP's new program in Malawi. Your donation will make a huge difference in the life of a rural family.

It is easy to make a secure donation online by [clicking here](#) or by visiting www.asapafrika.org. Or mail your donation to:

ASAP Africa
P.O. Box 2275
Peachtree City, GA 30269

If you have any questions or comments please call (770) 632-7451.
Thank you for your interest and kind support!

Sincerely,
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